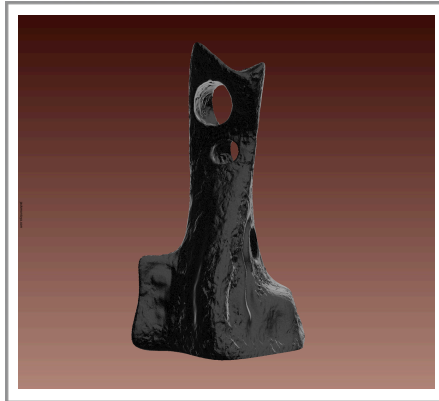


The Arts NEWSLETTER



FALL 2021



Above: Rock Art Sketch (left), Message From Earth #1 (Right)

Jack Montoya - Featured Artist

Robot Ants, Chalk and Clay

It was about 20 years ago, when I was working on a couple of research projects on computer vision; one dealing with pattern recognition, mainly edge-detection on images; the second problem involved obstacle avoidance in virtual 3D space. At the same time, I was teaching a grad course with heavy use of computer graphics.

When programming the algorithms, I had no major technical concerns about solving the problem. When teaching that course, I had no doubt my students would do well. I found myself paying attention to my student's reaction to the graphical displays during class, and when programming my computer vision algorithms, I was imagining what the system would "see".

I went to great lengths programming a rather unnecessary application with a human-viewable display of what my artificial autonomous ants were doing in virtual 3D space. After finishing the program and seeing the "real time" view of what my artificial ants were facing, it was clear that I was investing my energy analyzing shapes, forms, volumes and

people's reactions to them; as much as in the computational algorithms.

The message from this story was that deep into the woods of the technical complexities of my academic work, the artistic curiosity was lurking.

I was sculpting on and off for years, with the line in the sand to keep sculpture as a manual activity separated from technology. After years with this approach I started experimenting with the integration of technology into art projects. From dusting off some of my solid-state motor controller circuits to operate moving color plates, to programming an interface with a depth sensor for 3D scanning, I found my background in technology was helping me propel my artistic interests. After some successful stories sending my work to galleries, and with the invaluable help of support of gallery curators and art enthusiasts, I was determined to keep working on my art on a regular basis.

Preserving the soul of the artwork and the "hand of the artist" has been a priority, which involves a time consuming process of integrating



Study for the Magic Pond, (figure 5) technology while retaining the human element. One of my strongest influences is the graphic language of the artifacts from the ancient Americas. Being in close contact with archaeological sites since early childhood, this cultural memory comes into play for introducing the human element into a technology assisted art or craft activity.

I always find a visual element in ancient rock art or pottery that brings humanity and soul to a modern made object.

North Country Arts (NCA)
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Exploring the idea of process and technology, I wanted to present three cases: sketch to digital sculpture, plaster to 3D print and a more traditional scenario.

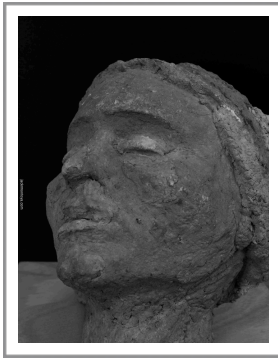
Sketch to digital sculpture

I was sketching ancient rock art, and experimenting with 3D projections of those shapes. This started the series “Message from Earth,” in which I use my drawings to build 3D shapes in a workflow of 3D software tools. The first example is illustrated in figures 1 and 2, in which we have my initial sketches from the pictographs and the rendered digital sculpture. I started giving volume to the 3 totem-shaped forms using rudimentary shading, then I digitally sculpted the first totem. I refined and finished the 3D printed version,



Message from Earth #3, rendered 3D model

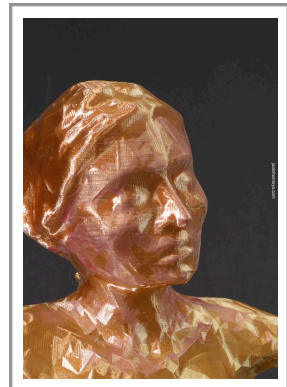
having the great fortune that this piece was chosen by a curator of a world-class museum to enter an art show in New York city. Despite the fact that I didn't think much about digital sculpture, this surprising success encouraged me to keep this series going and we can see the example of Message from Earth #3.



Study for the Magic Pond, (figure 4)

Plaster to 3D print

Preparing for a series evoking tales of mystical ponds filled with gold or silver, I did some sketches on paper and modeled directly a plaster study (Figure 4). Using this study as a reference, I created “Legend of the Silver Pond” (Figure 5 – preceding page), sculpting manually in plastic, as I wanted a lightweight wall sculpture to preserve the overhead point of view. This sculpture depicted a moment of spiritual elevation with the figure suspended in the magical silver-filled pond, referring to some South American tales. Revisiting this idea, I decided to 3D-scan my plaster study, and refine it with the 3D software. There are tools for making faces and figures digitally, however, for this application I prefer to sculpt by hand in plaster, and then 3D scan the sculpture. The “low-poly” 3D print acts as a digital study for this project (Figure 6). When comparing the plaster and hand-formed plastic with the 3D print, the usual qualities of the hand-made object become apparent.



Digital study for the Magic Pond, printed 3D scan from plaster sculpture (figure 6)

My favorite things

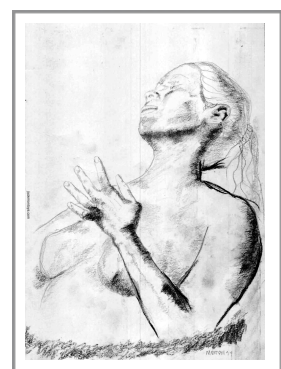
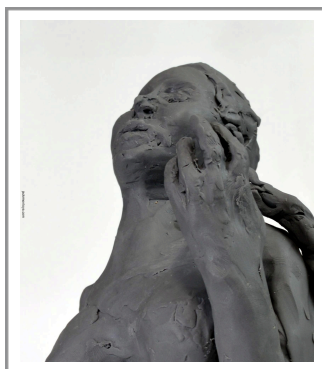
After looking at some of the ancient Valdivia figurines, I started a study of the ritual bather, using a vantage point from below. One of my sketches is in Figure 7. From these drawings I did a clay study (Figures 8-9), trying to capture the view of the bather in ritualistic pose, from below the water level. This creates an interesting situation, because if this sculpture is on a pedestal, is likely to be observed from eye-level or above (Figure 9), even when the creation point of view is below the base of the piece (Figure 8). This problem won't be as evident in a virtual 3D space, and to me it showcases one of the advantages of the traditional process.

From these three cases I conclude that while I feel comfortable with the aforementioned technologies, drawing on paper and hand-sculpting are still two of my favorite things. Don't be sad my virtual robot ants, I'll always remember you.

Left: Clay study for the Night Waters, oil and wax-based study (figure 8)

Middle: Clay study for the Night Waters, oil and wax-based study (figure 9)

Right: Study for the Night Waters, chalk on paper (figure 7)



President's Message

Dear North Country ARTS Members,

North Country Arts will truly miss our beloved member, Elizabeth (Betty) O'Brien. She was a prolific artist and mentor to many and an essential member of our Gallery Committee and Board of Trustees. We will celebrate her art during our last show of the year, appropriately entitled "Celebration".

The demand for opportunities to exhibit in our new gallery space is obviously good news for our organization. However, this has made it necessary for NCA to limit the number of entries per exhibit to one, no larger than four feet in any direction. This allows us to open the small gallery space to artists who are interested in showing a body of work during the scheduled shows. More information will be forthcoming.

Due to virus, it was necessary to postpone our 50th anniversary gala at the Queensbury Hotel until April of 2022. Committees are beginning to work on various aspects of the event. If you are interested in working on entertainment, decorations, invitations, auctions and/or advertisement committees, please contact me. We WELCOME you to join the team.

Our fall workshops are underway. If you haven't had an opportunity to read the brochure, please visit our website or stop by the gallery for information. The variety of courses will not disappoint you. There is still time to participate.

Sincerely,
Judith Atatoli Tully

News From the Arts District of Glens Falls: Public Art on the Traffic Light Switch Boxes

North Country Arts is part of the Arts District of Glens Falls (ADGF) which has set the perimeter of the Arts District that currently has banners on the light poles and soon will have bicycle racks along the trail. This year, the committee received a grant to fund artists to paint the switch boxes at the traffic lights along the trail. The City of Glens Falls gave ADGF permission to paint the boxes. After a request for proposals was sent out to artists via LARAC, the committee selected seven artists to paint the boxes along the trail. The following artists are painting the following boxes:

Hannah Williams	Washington & Bay
Shelly Fairbanks	Warren & Church
Olga Alexandrova	Warren & Oak
Kevin Clark	Glen St. L.
Stephanie Vaus	Glen & Washington
Rodney Bentley	Ridge & Maple
Leah Hofgesang	Washington & Ridge

Classical Music and More in the Glens Falls - Lake George Region, edited by Eric Ball, a publication of SUNY Empire State College: "Reflections on North Country Arts" - Collaborative Oratorios

Catherine Reid and Anthime Miller were interviewed about the oratorios. The first oratorio in 2017 called "Last Call", was based on the poetry of Paul Pines. Members of NCA interpreted his poetry in art which were exhibited both at the Wood Theater during the performance and then at Crandall Public Library. In 2020, a second oratorio, called "Holding It All" was based on the poetry of Bernice Mennis. Due to the pandemic, the performance was recorded and presented on YouTube. The interpretation of the poetry in art by NCA artists was projected during the performance intermission.

The cover of the publication was the Firebird (right), by Jacqueline Toubia, Ph.D., a watercolor batik on Japanese ginwashi paper. Paper copies are available at the Folklife Center, Crandall Public Library or online at www.esu/academic-affairs/awards/imperatore-projects.



Member News

Diane Swanson will have a solo exhibit at the Caldwell Lake George Library October 1 to November 30, of her newest Lake George and Adirondack paintings in watercolor and oil. A reception is scheduled for Thursday, October 7 at 7 p.m.

Right: Watercolor, pen & ink artwork by Diane Swanson



Gary Larsen is proud to have had his photograph "**Fog on Tupper Lake**" (left) chosen by AARP for their 2022 calendar. Although placed on the back face of the calendar, it is still an honor to have it included. This was originally the grand prize winner in the Adirondack Life magazine photo contest in April 2018. He finds it nice to have it re-emerge to a more current visibility! It is also prominently displayed at the Mountain Gallery in Glens Falls, until September 18th.

Celebration and Open House at The Shirt Factory

Each year, the Shirt Factory sponsors an open house, requiring all the first floor studios and shops to be open and they also invite additional vendors to set up in the hallways or empty studios. Some may even be set up in the NCA Gallery. The Shirt Factory does extensive advertising and there is usually a large turnout of people looking for Christmas presents, i.e. with money to spend in their pocket. This is a great time of year to show your work at the NCA Gallery at the next exhibition called Celebrations. The dates for the Open Houses are:

The weekend after Thanksgiving—Fri. Nov. 26, Sat. Nov. 27 and Sun. Nov. 28 from 10-5 p.m. and two weeks later, Sat. Dec. 11 and Sun. Dec. 12 from 10 a.m to 5 p.m.

Celebration — Opening November 20 to January 8, 2022. Drop off is Nov. 13, 2021

This will be a special exhibition for not only will this be an opportunity to put great art before the public for the Christmas holidays but it will also be a Memorial Exhibit for Betty O'Brien.

Betty O'Brien was a long time resident of the Shirt Factory with a large studio on the 2nd Floor. Betty had a career in teaching before coming to the Shirt Factory and continued teaching in her studio. She was an accomplished artist and was always innovating. Betty was an important member of the NCA Board of Directors, serving as the Secretary of the Board and also as a member of the Gallery Committee. Betty was a staple at the Saturday art drop offs and always attended the receptions and openings. She was even working at the drop off of the Journeys Exhibition before falling ill on the following Sunday. Betty's presence will be with us through her work which will be shown in the Solo Gallery of #120 opening on November 20th along with Celebrations.

At the opening, we shall also be honoring founding director Sara Cutshall-King and early Board member Pam Mikel-Hayes at the opening in celebration of North Country Arts 50th anniversary in 2021. Due to the pandemic, the anniversary gala was postponed until April 2022.

NCA's Second Floor Gallery Fall 2021 Exhibits

BY DENNIS WILSON -

Fall 2021 brings with it an exhibition to NorthCountryARTS City Hall Gallery. We hope all NCA members can drop by to enjoy viewing it. The schedule is as follows:

2021 FALL 2ND FLOOR GALLERY SCHEDULE	DATES OF DISPLAY	RECEPTION
Judith Aratoli Tully	9/27 - 11/5	no reception



Like many NCA members, Judith began her career as an arts educator, teaching at Longwood High School on Long Island. Her university background is in both Advertising Art and Design and Art Education. In 2007, after 34 years as an arts educator, she relocated to the north country to fulfill a dream: draw and paint the colors and shapes of the magnificent Adirondacks.

To capture Adirondack light in her work is especially important to her. She utilizes oils, gouache and pastel to realize her vision. Judith has also done commissions, painted murals, and worked with the National Dance Museum. Presently President of NorthCountryArts, Judith has coordinated its Youth Visions Program and served on many committees.

Colors and shapes, especially of the north country, inspire Judith in her personal artistic journey. With her paintings she hopes to reveal beauty and inspire joy.



North Country Arts to Honor Sara Cutshall-King and Pam Hayes, by Sara Cutshall-King

Although NCA was founded in 1971 run by a group of artists in Warrensburg, it was not until Sara Cutshall-King took over as the first Executive Director in 1975 that NCA began expanding activities and moved to a larger facility. However, the grant received dried up the next year so Sara had to look for free facilities, eventually moving to Glens Falls. It was at this point in the spring of 1976 Pam Mikel-Hayes came on the scene. in Sara's words,

"In the spring of 1976, Pam Mikel-Hayes came into the North Country Arts Center (NCAC) in Warrensburg to sell some notepaper she had drawn just as I was trying to determine what our next move would be. Paid staff was a part time assistant and me. We had a crew of volunteers.

We hit it off and she became another volunteer just as NCAC funding was changing me into a volunteer. I was lucky. She had just moved with Brian to Glens Falls so I commandeered her full attention to what became the move, the setup of the store and gallery, and participation in all of our projects and governance of the NCAC for the next few years.

The first Glens Falls Farmers Market will always be one of our favorites in spite of the early hours we had to get up to set up. Among our favorite activities, our success with the first Beaux Arts Ball of 1978 in collaboration with the Lake George Opera Guild stands out. The event continued to be held for five more years.

We did a lot, we had a lot of people helping in all organizations . . . too many to name. Most are no longer with us.

Through all of these diverse events we were able to meet so many different people from different professions whom we wouldn't have met otherwise. Rather than compete, these same creative and adventurous people supported the efforts of each other. That was truly a gift.

We were young. We worked hard. We had fun."



NCA Board Members

Officers

Judith Aratoli Tully: President, Gallery Committee and 50th Anniversary Gala Committee Chairperson

Phil Casabona: Vice Pres. and Gallery Committee, Juried Show Expressions

Ann Nelson, Secretary

Jacquiline Toubia, Ph.D.: Treasurer, Grant Writer, GFArtsDistrict Rep, Juried Art Show Expressions Coordinator, Marketing Committee

Others

Nancy Austin - Newsletter Coordinator and Designer, Marketing Committee

Maria Clara Castano: 2nd Floor Gallery Chair

Anthony Richichi - New Board Member

Jon Segan: Gallery Committee, Hanging Coordinator

Lee Shippey: Labels and Programs

Sheri Snedeker: Gallery Committee

Dolores Thomson - Chair, Marketing Committee

Adelaide Walsh-Leibold: Juror's Choice Fine Art Show Coordinator at Crandall Library, Gallery Committee

Non-Board Volunteers

Robin Brewer: 2nd Floor Gallery Assistant

JoAnn Johnson: Marketing Committee

Lisa Hart: Marketing Committee

Russell Hillard: 2nd Floor Gallery Assistant

Emily Latterell: Membership Chairperson

Jennifer Switzer: Bookkeeper

Jim Tubbs: Gallery Committee

Dennis Wilson: 2nd Floor Gallery Exhibit Writer

Stewart's Shops

2021 North Country Arts Schedule

Shirt Factory Holiday Open Houses

November 26-28, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

December 11 & 12, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Celebration

November 20 - January 8

Drop off: November 13

Pick up: January 8

Betty O'Brien Memorial Exhibit (Small Gallery)

Recognition of Founders Members: Sara Cutshall-King and Pam Hayes

NCA Fine Arts Exhibit at Friends Gallery at Crandall Public Library

December 4 - December 29

Drop off: December 4, 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Pick up: December 29, 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

No reception

Sweetheart Deal - \$99 or Less

Two Pieces and No Commission

January 15 - March 19

Drop off: January 8

Pick up: March 19

From the Studio

March 23 - April 23

Drop off: March 19

Pick up: April 23

Expressions Juried Art Show - Juror: John Hampshire, Professor of Art, SUNY Adirondack

April 30 - June 11

Drop off: April 23

Pick up non-accepted pieces Thursday and Friday

Pick up: June 11

Translation

June 18 - August 13

Drop off: June 11

Pick up: August 13



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